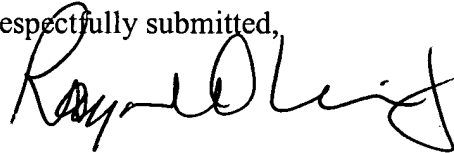


**REMARKS**

This Preliminary Amendment is filed in order to enter the complete chain of continuing data and also to add an Abstract of the Invention.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



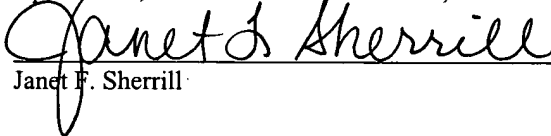
Raymond O. Linker, Jr.  
Registration No. 26,419

**Customer No. 00826**  
**ALSTON & BIRD LLP**  
Bank of America Plaza  
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000  
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000  
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000  
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111  
CLT01/4621085v1

**CERTIFICATE OF EXPRESS MAILING**

"Express Mail" mailing label number EV331632235US  
Date of Deposit November 24, 2003

I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to: Mail Stop Patent Application, Commissioner For Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

  
Janet F. Sherrill